

BIOGRAPHY

DALE LEMUEL LOPSHIRE

MASON OF THE YEAR - 1991

SAN PEDRO LODGE #55

BENSON, ARIZONA

WORSHIPFUL BROTHER DALE LOPSHIRE was born on December 7th, 1925, (he has always maintained that he is a Pearl Harbor Baby) in Fort Wayne, Indiana, a son of Harry Franklin and Agnes May (nee Sorgen) Lopshire, who raised a total of nine children consisting of 5 boys and 4 girls. His father was a Mason and his brother, Richard J. "Dick" Lopshire later became a Mason and served the M.W. Grand Lodge of Arizona as its Grand Master in 1965.

Worshipful Brother Dale Lopshire first came to Arizona when he lived with his Brother Dick and sister-in-law Jeanette during the summer of 1943. Returning to Fort Wayne, he enlisted in the U.S. Navy in September 1943 and was sent to Great Lakes Naval Training Center for his basic training. He was assigned further training in electronics at Iowa State College, Ames Iowa, and Gyro-Compass training at the Naval Training Center, San Diego, California. He was assigned to the Amphibious Forces and commissioned a new ship, an APA, which was assigned to the South Pacific. This ship traveled over 200,000 miles in the next two years and saw action at Iwo Jima, Okinawa, and was part of the occupational forces in the Phillipines. This ship was the eighth ship to enter the harbor at Yokohama on V-J Day with the troops to occupy Japan on their surrender. He served a total of 4 years, 3 months in the U.S. Navy and was honorably discharged, after which he returned to Benson, Arizona to visit his brother's family.

He decided to stay in Benson and try his hand in the business world, and purchased a Texaco Service Station which he operated for the next three years. Worshipful Brother Dale was in the U.S. Navy Reserves, and during the Korean conflict felt that he must return to active duty, so he worked at the U.S. Naval Shipyard in San

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Diego during that period.

Prior to leaving Benson he had petitioned King Solomon Lodge #5 in Tombstone, Arizona, for the degrees of Masonry, and was accepted and initiated before returning to California. He received the remaining degrees by courtesy of the Cross Roads Lodge in San Diego and was raised to the sublime degree of Master Mason in March 1951, and became a member of King Solomon Lodge #5, Tombstone, Arizona.

While living in San Diego he met Joan and they were married in August 1953. He took Joan to meet his brother's family in Benson. Joan fell in love with Arizona and they moved to Benson in September 1953. They raised 3 children in Benson, 2 girls and 1 boy, who have provided them with 6 grandchildren. The family was quite active in the community at this time and were faithful to the Community Presbyterian Church where Joan taught Sunday School and Dale was a member of the choir.

Worshipful Brother Dale received his first appointment in King Solomon Lodge #5 as Junior Deacon for 1954, and became Worshipful Master of that Lodge in 1957. He served on the Board of Trustees during the following 3 years. The Lodge was very active during this period due to the reactivation of Fort Huachuca and the resultant considerable growth experienced by Cochise County. The brethren wanted a Lodge near Fort Huachuca, and the members of King Solomon #5 assisted them in the forming and chartering of Huachuca Lodge #53 in 1957. With additional growth and stability in King Solomon #5, the brethren from Benson wanted their own Lodge also. The members of King Solomon #5 again were instrumental in the forming and chartering of San Pedro Lodge #55 in 1959. Worshipful Brother Dale was one of 5 brothers who organized this Lodge, and became a charter member, serving as its first Junior Warden. He served as the Worshipful Master in 1961 and today is the senior living Past Master; as such he is issued dues card #1, of which he is quite proud. Worshipful Brother Dale was the first Lodge coach

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for the candidates and the officers. The Junior Warden of San Pedro Lodge was also required to perform the duties of the ancient craft and supervised the members who volunteered to build their own Lodge building, and they actually did build most of it.

Our Brother was quite active during this period in the Grand Lodge of Arizona. His activities included Deputy Grand Lecturer, Chairman of the Masters and Wardens Association of Southern Arizona, served on the General Policy Committee and the General Arrangements Committee for the Annual communication held in Tombstone, and was a Grand Representative to Oklahoma. The Lodges of Wilcox, Bowie and Benson also started the outdoor degree in Texas Canyon during this period, and Worshipful Brother Lopshire was honored with the privilege of conferring the degree on the first candidate.

Worshipful Brother Lopshire became a member of the Order of the Eastern Star in 1957 and joined his wife Joan in the East as Worthy Patron of Venus #12 in 1959. Together they were instrumental in organizing a chapter in Benson, and Dale served as Charter Worthy Patron in 1960-1961, and again in 1976. He has been active in the Grand Chapter of Arizona OES, having served in several positions, including Assistant Grand Sentinel, Distinguished Guest Committee, Banquet Committee, Banquet Master of Ceremonies, and on the Jurisprudence Committee. His wife Joan served as Worthy Grand Matron of the Grand Chapter of Arizona in 1985, and his support for her activities in this office and his devotion to her are well known to all members of the order.

His community service activities include Lions Club International. He became a member in Benson in 1954, and served as President of the club in 1956-1957. He became a charter member of the Breakfast Club in Sierra Vista in 1974, and served as its President in 1978-1979. That club awarded him a life membership and a Melvin Jones Fellowship. He also served as District Governor and Chairman

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of the Board of Governors of the Multiple District. He also served on the Benson Chamber of Commerce Merchant's Committee, and was Benson's Citizen of the Year for 1969. He was a member of the board of directors of the Sierra Vista Chamber of Commerce and chaired several committees in that position. He served two terms on the Industrial Development Authority of Cochise County and was its President in 1989.

Worshipful Brother Dale Lopshire remains active in Masonry to this day, and leaves no doubt that he believes that a Mason's first and most important duty is to his Blue Lodge. He is usually the first to be asked to fill a vacant station, which he can do on a minute's notice. He continues to do degree work in several Lodges. He is also a participant in all of the Lodge Installations, usually Installing Master, occasionally Installing Marshall, and sometimes presents the Past Master's Apron or helps write the program. Because of his Masonic background and knowledge of Freemasonry, his counsel and advice are often sought by the brethren. He continues to serve on committees either in an active or advisory position. He will arrange a Lodge program when asked, and has recently conducted seminars on the guidelines of a good lodge for our officers and members. He does attend Grand Lodge when he can, and this past year he again carried the Past Master's vote. He was instrumental in instituting a coffeeklatch at the Lodge to invite sojourning Masons and Stars to get acquainted, and it has grown to a pancake breakfast during the winter months. We now often have more visitors on our sidelines than members during the winter months, and our list of visitors continues to grow.

In 1991 he was appointed by the Worshipful Master to be an advisor to the Master and his committees in the areas of Constitution and By-Laws, Audit and Finance, Ritual and Floor Work, and was appointed to fill a vacancy on the Board of Trustees. He assisted in the preparation of reports of those committees, wrote resolutions to be presented when needed, and wrote some long

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overdue amendments to our by-laws for presentation and vote of the Lodge. He was appointed General Chairman of our annual Table Lodge for the third time, and acted as Master of Ceremonies and Worshipful Master. The Table Lodge gets bigger and better each year, and is probably our most successful event. Under his leadership over 40% of our members participated, all of the Cochise County Lodges were represented, and all chairs for the opening, closing, and Table Lodge Ritual were filled by Past Masters representing all the Cochise County Lodges. Many of the Grand Lodge officers were present, including several Past Grand Masters as well as many brethren from other Lodges both within and without the state. The highpoint of the evening was, of course, the reception of the Most Worshipful Grand Master. EVERY ONE OF THE WORSHIPFUL MASTERS OF THE SEVEN LODGES IN COCHISE COUNTY WERE PRESENT AND GREETED OUR GRAND MASTER ON HIS WAY TO THE EAST. We are convinced of that which WB Lopshire has always maintained: that the most important part of this affair is the reception of the Grand Master. We now have members attending whom we have not seen in several years, and even had a charter member attend whom most of us knew, but not as a Mason. The results of WB Lopshire's efforts are becoming very evident in our Lodge, and we are learning to lead from his example. This Lodge has presented a Mason of the Year award on only one other occasion; it has been decided to do this annually. The committee felt that this year's Mason of the Year in San Pedro Lodge #55 should be WB Dale Lopshire, and he was given this honor at our Installation.

This Lodge received the Master Builder Award for the first time this past year. This accomplishment requires the efforts of many brothers, especially the Masters for the years 1990 and 1991. Both of these Past Masters agree that the efforts of WB Dale were a key factor in this accomplishment. The results due to the efforts of WB Dale are quite evident not only in our own Lodge, but also evident among Lodges of Cochise County, southern Arizona, and in the relationship of our Lodge with Grand Lodge Officers. We

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believe that the communications and Masonic fellowship have been greatly enhanced by this brother's efforts to teach us the way to improve ourselves in Masonry.

We believe that Worshipful Brother Dale Lopshire is a good candidate for the Arizona Mason of the Year Award, and trust that you will give this nomination every consideration.

Respectfully and Fraternally Submitted,

WB R.C. Richards

WB H.A. Lasley

San Pedro Lodge #55